

BOOK NOTICE

GISELLA S. CRUZ GARCÍA. 2012. **Ethnobotanical Study of Wild Food Plants Used by Rice Farmers in Northeast Thailand.** (ISBN-13: 978-94-6173-275-0, pbk.). Thesis, Wageningen University, Wageningen, The Netherlands. (**Orders:** no order information available). \$No price given, 215 pp., b/w figures, graphs, tables, 6½" × 9½".

From the Abstract: "A theoretical model was developed and field work was conducted in Kalasin, Northeast Thailand. The empirical analysis comprised three principle analytically and methodologically coherent research components: (a) botanical (species level), (b) ecological (ecosystem and sub-system) and (c) anthropological (household level). This was reflected in the use of research methodologies drawn from (ethno)botany, ecology and anthropology, respectively.

Results showed a total of 87 elicited wild food plant species comprising trees, terrestrial and aquatic herbs, climbers, shrubs, bamboos and a rattan growing in anthropogenic ecosystems including rice fields home gardens, secondary woods, upland fields, swamps and roadsides. Most species can be found in different places and more than two thirds of the species have extra uses besides food.

A total of 42 wild food plant species were reported in 102 sampling sites corresponding to seven sub-systems associated to lowland rice production, including shelters, hillocks, ponds, and their margins, tree rows, dikes and field margins.

This study highlighted the importance of diversity at species, sub-system and ecosystem level, and confirmed the theoretical model on seasonal and spatial complementarity of anthropogenic ecosystems and sub-systems for provisioning and gathering wild food plants. It was concluded that this complementarity is crucial for household food security and dietary diversity, and has major societal implications for agricultural programs, food policies, biodiversity conservation initiatives and poverty alleviation strategies in the region.

Summaries in English and Dutch.

Key Words: Wild food plant, ethnobotany, domestication, anthropogenic ecosystem, rice ecosystem, home garden, gathering, abundance, diversity, seasonality, ecosystem complementarity, multi-functionality, poverty, vulnerability, rice farmers, Thailand, Southeast Asia."